Probe of JFK A ssination

Unit to Question Dallas Agents

By Norman Kempster
Washington Star Staff Writer

A House subcommittee investigating charges that the FBI withheld evidence from the Warren Commission plans to question agents from the bureau's Dallas office who had dealings with Lee Harvey Oswald prior to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Witnesses to be called by the Judiciary subcommittee to hearings later this month include James P. Hosty Jr., the FBI agent whose name appeared in Oswald's address book, and Gordon Shanklin, the special agent in charge of the Dallas office.

"We think everything should be laid out on the public record before everybody dies," Chairman Don Edwards, D-Calif., said in a telephone interview.

HOSTY HAS declined to discuss the matter in public in recent years even though his name figures in many of the perplex uestions that have been raised he Warren Commission conc that Oswald was the lone assa

Edwards said the J Department has agreed to t Hosty, now assigned to the K City office, to testify under h. The chairman said he had assured that Shanklin, who has retired, also will appear.

In a session last mo t raised far more questions th swered, the committee was t mes B. Adams, deputy asso I director, that Hosty and S told directly contradictory to the bureau's internal in on into the destruction of a Oswald delivered at the Dal a few days before the Nov. assassination.

The FBI withhe rmation about the letter fro Warren Commission. The bu 84med reports about the le y after they appeared in new earlier this year.

ADAMS SAID Hos he destroyed the letter on n's instructions just two h er Oswald was pronounced ov. 24. But Adams said Shan id he knew nothing of either ipt or the destruction of the l

Edwards said the co ee decided that the only way ve the conflict was to questio r oath Hosty, Shanklin, an off eptionist who saw the letter a ers.

Receptionist Mancy enner said the letter contained reat to blow up the FBI office an Dallas police department if H d not stop harassing Oswald ssian-born wife, Marina. Ho d the letter urged him to l arina alone but contained no th

In addition to the O letter, Edwards said the commit ans to ask for additional inform about the FBI's handling of O 's address book which contain sty's name, address and auto li number.

When the FBI originally t the Warren Commission a me on the contents of Oswald's add book, the reference to Hosty's n was omitted. When the commis staff asked about the omission, late FBI Director J. Edgar H said the original memo had ined only information that mi vide leads. Since Hosty was well n to the bureau, Hoover said, ame did not provide a lead to F stigators.

Kesler prepared the original memo which was later included in a longer memo by Gemberling. Gemberling said the first page of the Kesler memo was retyped to put it on plain paper instead of a memo letterhead to facilitate including it in his memo.

ACCORDING to Hoch, each page of Kesler's 30-page memo is numbered at the bottom except for the first, which Gemberling said was retyped, and page 25, where the Hosty reference would have appeared if the address book had been copied completely. Those two pages were numbered at the top of the page.

In addition, Hoch said, the margin at the bottom of page 25 is larger than the margin at the bottom of other pages in the memo.

Hoover's letter to commission general counsel J. Lee Rankin's questions about the Hosty reference was tart in tone. He insisted that the FBI had always "reported all available and relevant facts" to the commission. He said, "I trust that this letter and the enclosures thereto will satisfy the requirements of the commission."

Recently declassified minutes of the commission's executive sessions indicate that there was some reluctance to argue with the irascible FBI head. Apparently, the question of why Hosty's name was omitted from the original memo was not raised again. Probably the commission felt there was no need to pursue the issue further since the evidence was then in hand.

HOWEVER, the original memo did contain large amouts of extraneous information which was of doubtful lead value.

Edwards said of Hoover's explanation, "It isn't a satisfactory answer, of course."

Warren Commission critics who believe Oswald may have been an FBI informant frequently cite the fact that he had Hosty's name in the address book.

A private researcher, Paul L. Hoch of Berkeley, Calif., offers circumstantial evidence in an unpublished manuscript that a page of the FBI memo was retyped to remove Hosty's name.

Hoover and FBI agents John T. Kesler and Robert P. Gemberling all swore in affidavits to the Warren Commission that the reference to Hosty was not removed in an effort to mislead the commission.